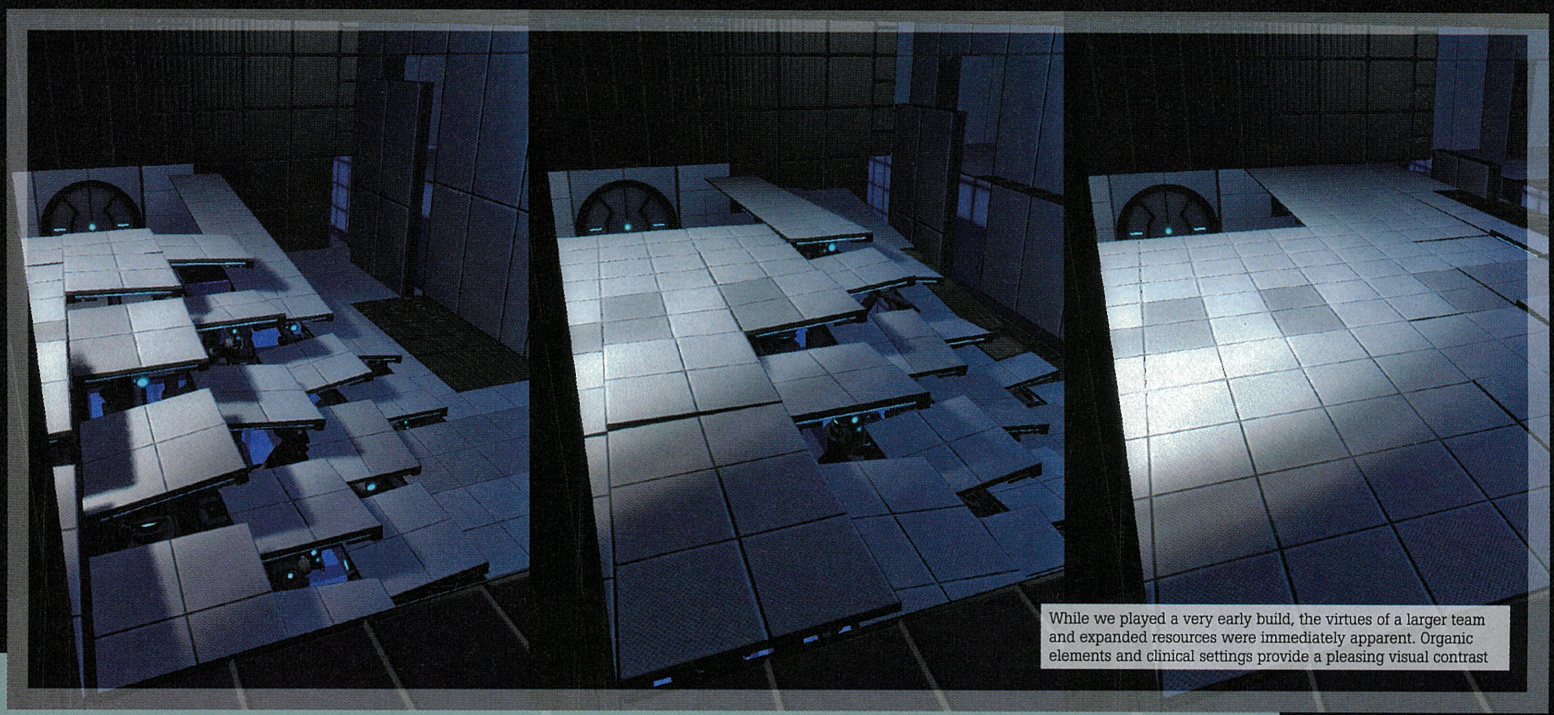
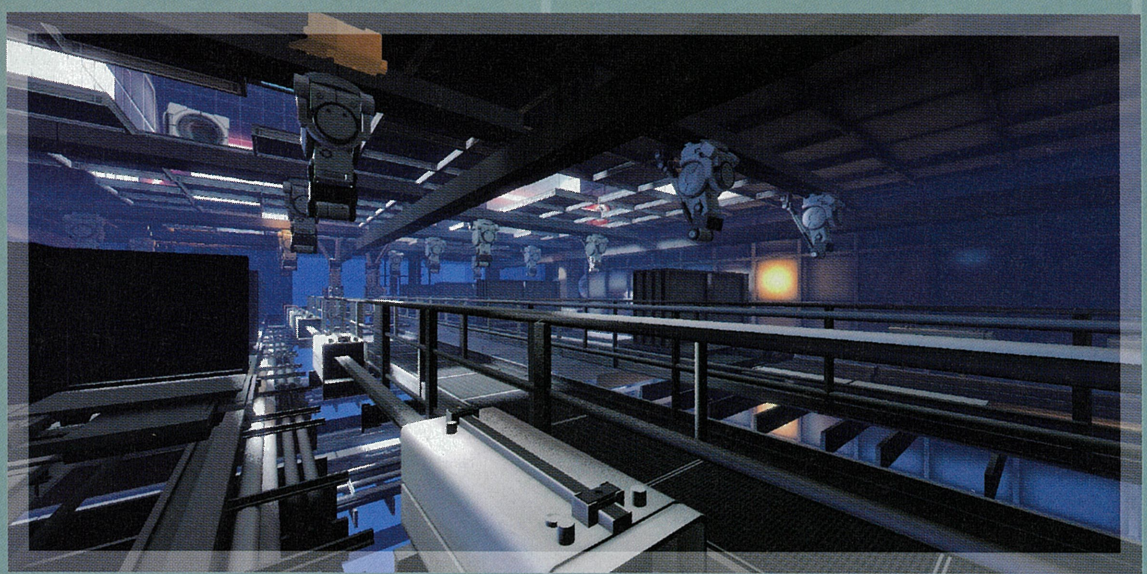
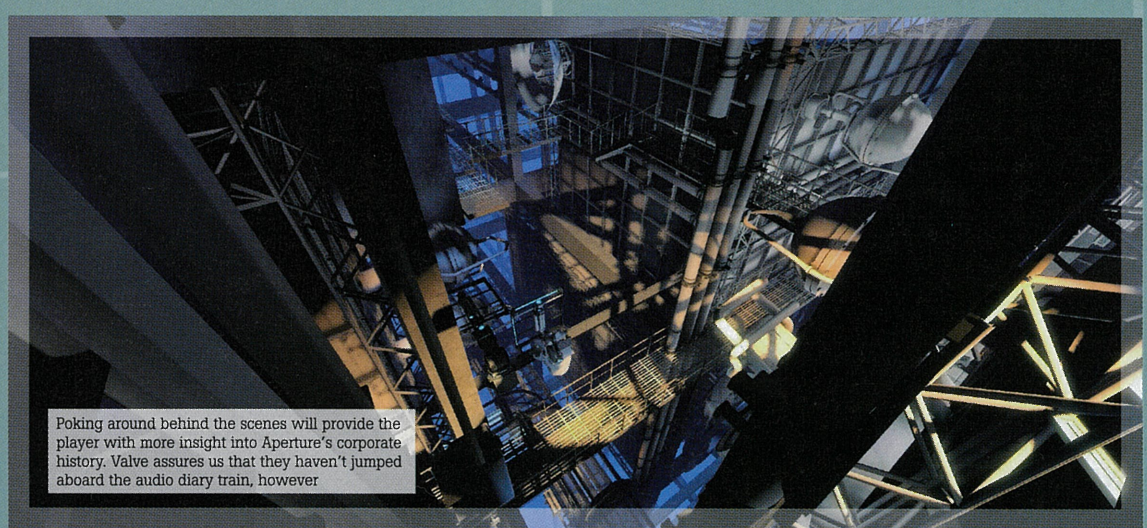


While we played a very early build, the virtues of a larger team and expanded resources were immediately apparent. Organic elements and clinical settings provide a pleasing visual contrast





Poking around behind the scenes will provide the player with more insight into Aperture's corporate history. Valve assures us that they haven't jumped aboard the audio diary train, however

Behind The Curtain

Despite its short length, Portal's unique puzzle gameplay made it a fulfilling experience. Much of this had to do with Valve's intentional pacing. Chell began her journey guided by the hand through a very controlled environment. As the story progressed, Chell became more autonomous and GLaDOS conversely became unhinged, subtly alluding to trouble behind the scenes. At the pinnacle of her skills, Chell then pulled back the curtain and proceeded into the great unknown. Not wanting to rely on the same formula, Portal 2 unfolds at a staccato pace, not a crescendo.

"We've had the idea in Portal 1 that the labs were reconfigurable through this modular system, but we were never able to show it," laments Wolpaw. "Because the fiction dictates that the labs were destroyed at the end of Portal 1, she [GLaDOS] is having to rebuild things as she is putting you through these tests. So the labs reconfiguring is going to play a much bigger role in the game itself."

The extensive damage to the test chambers is too much for GLaDOS to repair unaided, but she refuses to delay resuming her tests. This means she will begrudgingly allow you behind the scenes of Aperture Laboratories in order to reach the next testing chamber. This will result in a less predictable progression, allowing you to periodically escape her sphere of influence. Or so we think. Panopticon-inspired paranoia will probably keep the player intensely aware of GLaDOS' silent omniscience. Is Chell ever really alone?